

American Friends Bazaar 1841

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Friends in Jordan

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The Friends Meetinghouse, Ramallah, Jordan

Friends in Jordan

For nearly a century the Society of Friends has had a share in the life of the people of the Holy Land. The Friends Mission at Ramallah, established in 1869 when Palestine was a part of the Ottoman Empire, has served continuously since that time, except for a period of about four years during World War I.

The American Friends Service Committee now has a project in Jordan, established in 1961 with headquarters in the capital city, Amman. This project, growing out of village development work conducted near Jerash by the AFSC 1953-1956, aids the Jordan government and the Jordan Central Cooperative Union in improving and expanding agriculture credit and marketing through village cooperatives. The creative work of the AFSC in Jordan has a story of its own, which cannot be told in detail here. This little booklet will attempt to tell the story of the work of Friends in Ramallah, which is a project of the Five Years Meeting of Friends.

FRIENDS RAMALLAH MISSION

Location: The Friends Ramallah Mission is located in the mountain town of Ramallah (Hill of God), ten miles north of Jerusalem. Jordan is a constitutional monarchy with the official name, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The present king is Hussein I. Amman is the capital of the country. The population of the land is chiefly Arab and the majority are Moslems. About 12 per cent of the population are Arab Christians. The language of the country is Arabic.

The work of the Mission is carried on under the auspices of the Five Years Meeting of Friends. It includes a Friends meeting and two boarding schools, one for boys and one for girls, situated about a mile apart. For many years the Mission has also carried on work in the villages surrounding Ramallah.

Early History of Friends in Palestine. The story of Friends in the Holy Land began in 1869, when Palestine was a part of the Ottoman Empire. In that year Eli and Sibyl Jones of South China, Maine journeyed to Palestine under a religious concern, having been liberated for this mission by China Monthly Meeting and New England Yearly Meeting. They were both able ministers in the Society of Friends.

Traveling under the guidance of a dragoman (professional guide) after the custom of the day, they visited schools and missions, bringing religious messages wherever they found an opening. When they reached Ramallah, they were touched to find the low rate of literacy and enlightenment in this Christian town. Very few of the population could read, and those few were men and boys. For women there were no educational opportunities at all.

As a result of their concern and the interest they were able to arouse in England and America, a mission was established at Ramallah within a few months of their visit. English Friends purchased three acres of land near the village and in 1883 they built a double house of stone to serve as a mission house. It was occupied by the families of two mission workers: Dr. George Hassenauer, who carried on medical mission work in the town and district, and Jacob Hishmeh, a Ramallah man who had charge of the day schools opened by the Mission in Ramallah, Ain Areek and Jifna. Both men carried on religious work along with their other responsibilities.

Five years after the establishment of the Mission in Ramallah, which was called "The Eli and Sibyl Jones Mission," Friends began a similar work in Brummana, Mount Lebanon. The financial responsibility for both these missions was shared by English Friends and New England Friends alike.

For the first twenty years of the Ramallah Mission, its work was largely under the supervision of English Friends, even though Friends on both sides of the Atlantic contributed to its support. In time it became clear that it would be expedient to divide the responsibility

for the two fields, English Friends taking Brummana and New England Yearly Meeting assuming the support and control of the work at Ramallah.

The division was carried out in complete harmony and with proper legal formalities. July 1, 1888, the Ramallah Mission officially passed into the hands of New England Yearly Meeting. The work then included six day schools, home visiting in villages, and a dispensary. Though there was not as yet an established monthly meeting, a small group of people in Ramallah had been drawn into the Society of Friends and were holding regular services in a house rented for that purpose.

The Committee now bent its efforts toward a new concern: the establishing of a training home for girls in the mission house. New England Yearly Meeting was roused to meet the challenge and a remarkable bond of love and confidence was formed between the New England Friends and the Ramallah Mission community. New England Yearly Meeting loyally carried the responsibility for the Mission from 1888 until 1918, when the Ramallah Mission was placed under the care of the American Friends Board of Foreign Missions, the body responsible for the foreign work of the Five Years Meeting of Friends at that time.

RAMALLAH MONTHLY MEETING

In 1890 the Ramallah Monthly Meeting of Friends was set up, with a membership of thirty-two. Huldah Leighton, the first matron of the Girls Training Home, served the meeting as minister until she retired in 1895. When she left, the local Friends did not feel equal to carrying on the business of the monthly meeting themselves, and the meeting was laid down until 1901, when Elihu and Almy Grant arrived on the field and helped the Friends reorganize their monthly meeting.

Elihu and Almy Grant retired in 1903, but in that year A. Edward Kelsey came with his family to serve as superintendent of the Mission. Among his responsibilities, leadership of the meeting held an important place. A. Edward Kelsey served for a number of years in Ramallah: 1903-1908; 1913-1927; and 1939-1944. Along with varied duties, which included teaching, fund-raising, construction of buildings and many other activities, he served the meeting faithfully.

Men officially appointed as pastors from time to time through the years have included A. Willard Jones, Kermit Schoonover, Alvano Goddard, W. Irving Kelsey, Delbert Reynolds, and Graham Leonard. There have been many periods when there was no appointed pastor. At these times, personnel appointed to serve in the Friends Schools have given leadership in the meeting in addition to full time school duties, including Absalom and Florabelle Rosenberger, Katie Gabriel, Alice W. Jones, Khalil A. Totah, James E. Sutton, George A. Scherer, Anna O. Langston, T. Robert Bassett and many others.



Swift House, the mission house of Friends Ramallah Mission

In 1925 a two-story mission house called "Swift House" was built on mission land across the road from Friends Boys School. This pleasant house has provided a home for resident pastors of the meeting, and at times for members of the school staffs appointed by the Mission Board.

The meetinghouse has a story of its own. Very soon after the reorganization of the monthly meeting in 1901, Ramallah Friends began collecting funds for a meetinghouse. In 1906 they bought the plot of ground on which the meetinghouse stands for 85 Napoleons, or about \$330.00. American Friends, notably Friends of the Haverford, Pennsylvania Meeting, raised funds for a building. Timothy Hussey superintended the building of the plain one-room meetinghouse, and the building was dedicated in 1910.

In 1912 there were 90 members on the roll of the meeting and during the months when the training homes were in session, the congregation was increased on Sunday mornings to about 150 people.

During World War I, when the mission property was occupied, first by Turkish and then by British troops, the meetinghouse was used as an army canteen. The Arab Friends loyally kept the meeting alive, holding their meetings for worship in the home of Elias Audi. When the mission was reopened in 1919, the meetinghouse became again a house of worship.

In May 1948 Ramallah was inundated by a tide of refugees, sweeping up from Jaffa, Ramleh, Lydda and villages lying between. The

meetinghouse was opened as a haven of refuge to some 50 refugees for several months. Then, from March 1949 until the fall of 1955 it was used by Church World Service as accommodations for a school for 300 refugee girls.

Throughout this period the meeting continued to hold regular services, sometimes in the Friends Schools, at other times in homes, and finally in the meetinghouse itself, in a section of the meeting room which was cleaned and arranged every Saturday by the refugee girls.

In 1955 the United Nations took over the management and support of the refugee school and moved it into rented quarters in the town.

In 1952 the Annex to the meetinghouse was dedicated. The cornerstone had been laid in 1940 with funds contributed by Sarah J. Swift of New England Yearly Meeting. Ramallah Friends hoped then to see the addition speedily completed, to afford space for the thriving Sunday school, which was outgrowing the single meeting room. Then World War II, the strife in Palestine and the prohibitive cost of building materials resulting from conditions in the country, combined to delay the work. In 1952 Church World Service, sponsors of the school for refugee girls which was then being conducted in the meetinghouse and in leaky tents on the grounds, gave the necessary financial assistance to complete the annex, so that all the refugee girls could have classes under a roof. At the dedication service, the new wing was named "Kelsey Annex" in grateful remembrance of the years of loving service given in Ramallah by A. Edward and Marion E. Kelsey.

The Ramallah Monthly Meeting is active and faithful today. The Sunday school ministers not only to the children of Friends, but to a large number of children in the community. The meeting is never large, for it struggles against the handicap of the constant loss of its youth, who leave the country to find a means of livelihood. There are about 85 members on the roll, of whom some are young people still in school.

THE NEAR EAST YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS

In 1926 the first General Meeting of Friends in the Near East was held at Brummana, in the Lebanon mountains. It was attended by five representatives from Ramallah. During the sessions it was decided to hold such a meeting annually, alternating between Brummana and Ramallah. As a result, the Yearly Meeting of Palestine and Syria was set up in 1929. Today it is called "The Near East Yearly Meeting of Friends."

Brummana Friends with their organizational ties with London Yearly Meeting, and Ramallah Friends, who are a part of the Five Years Meeting of Friends, find satisfaction and inspiration in worshipping together and uniting for discussion of their problems and concerns as Friends in the Near East today. A small but active Friends group in Beirut sends representatives to the meeting every year and contributes to the leadership in the sessions.

VILLAGE WORK

Christian witness outside Ramallah has been a concern of the Ramallah Mission since the early days. When New England took over the work of the Mission in 1888, there were day schools in Ain Areek, Jifna and Taiyibeh and three in Ramallah. All these schools were in Christian villages. It was needful to provide several schools in different quarters, for the closely knit tribes of the town were divided from each other by antagonistic feeling, and the children of one quarter were not allowed to attend school in another quarter.

Considerable home visiting and evangelistic work was carried on in Ramallah and surrounding villages by faithful Arab women workers, in those early days. Their visits and messages were well received by the women and children, particularly.

When the work of the Ramallah Mission was reopened after World War I, Friends opened schools for girls in three Christian villages, Bir Zeit, Jifna and Taiyibeh, and seven Moslem villages, Bireh, Beitunia, Ain Sinya, Dura, Giba, Attara and Deir Ghassaneh. During the depression in the early thirties, the village schools were closed, one by one, as the funds to support them diminished and finally ceased. After the Palestine government began assuming responsibility for girls' education, there was less need for Friends in this field of effort, so that the Friends' village schools were never reopened.

In the fall of 1923, a young Friend of the Ramallah Meeting was released from her teaching in the village schools maintained by the Ramallah Mission, to serve as a religious worker in the villages, as the way opened. She was Nahmeh Shahla, who felt a definite call to this work. For forty years, until the spring of 1962, when she passed to her reward, she ministered to a large number of villages in the Ramallah district, both Christian and Moslem, and was welcomed and loved in both. People came to her for help and counsel in all kinds of need, and her kindly response never failed. She herself found that abundant life of which Jesus taught, and she shared freely from her Bible the spiritual truth that was so dear to her.



The main building of Friends Girls School. This part of the building that overlooks the garden contains the original two-story house, in which the school was opened in 1889. The office, guest parlor and guest room, staff dining room and teachers' rooms occupy this part of the building today.

THE FRIENDS GIRLS SCHOOL

History. The Friends Girls School first opened its doors in October, 1889, under the name "Girls Training Home of Ramallah." The two-story stone house in which the school was accommodated is a part of the main building of the school today, and can be distinguished from the newer parts by its walls, four feet thick, its deep windows and the traditional vaulted ceilings.

The Friends who actually founded the school on behalf of New England Yearly Meeting, were Timothy and Anna Hussey and Sarah Hussey, a sister of Timothy. Theirs was the task of furnishing the mission house to serve a school, and finding staff and pupils. In a land where there was no interest in educating girls, unending patience and faith were required to set up a school for them.

The first year there were fifteen pupils, gathered from Lydda, Jaffa, Aboud, Jerusalem, Beirut and Ramallah. Six years later, in 1895, the first graduating class received diplomas.

The first headmistress of the Girls Training Home was Miss Katie Gabriel, a young woman from Kafreshima in the Lebanon Mountains, who had received her education in an English mission school in Shimlan. She was a person of fine Christian character as well as outstanding ability. She had taught in the British Syrian School for Girls in Beirut for thirteen years, the last seven years of which she was the head teacher. She now responded whole-heartedly to the call to give herself to pioneer work in women's education in the Holy Land.

For eighteen years Miss Katie was head of the school, then, after Alice Whittier Jones came from New England in 1906 to work in the school, the two women divided the responsibilities, which were becoming too many for one person, Alice Jones becoming principal and Miss Katie the matron. These two devoted women worked together in harmony and love until they retired together in 1929. They created a school tradition that still lives today.

The women who have served in the principalship since that time have striven to sustain the original high aims of the school: sound scholarship and skill in homemaking arts; the development of Christian character; and the fostering of a spirit of unselfish service in the world. Women who have served for longer or shorter periods as principal are: Edna C. Haviland, Mildred E. White, Victoria Hannush, Sylvia Clark, Elaine Lubbat, Annice Carter and Anna Langston, the present principal.

With the outbreak of World War I, all schools in Palestine were closed for nearly five years. The Girls Training Home suffered the same fate as others. The buildings and grounds sustained great loss during the war years, when they were occupied by Turkish and later by English troops.

When the school reopened in 1919, a new spirit was abroad in the land — a greater interest in education. It seemed the wise policy to accept day students to supplement the limited number of boarders which the school could accommodate — only fifty girls. It was at



Front entrance of Friends Girls School. To the right of the entrance hall is the chapel, "Swift Hall." The Arabic inscription cut in stone over the doorway is Isaiah 54:13 . . . "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children."

this time that the name of the school was changed to the present one — Friends Girls School.

Under the British Mandate, which followed the close of World War I, there were increased opportunities for the women of Palestine in nursing, teaching and secretarial work in government and business. There was a new demand for secondary education for girls. The opening of the Beirut College for Women in Lebanon in 1924 was a milestone along the path of progress. The Friends Girls School kept abreast of the times by gradually raising its requirements for graduation, adding one class at a time, until it attained secondary school status.

Through the years the school plant has necessarily been enlarged several times, as the school has grown. The first addition to the original double house was made in 1897 by Timothy Hussey, who made the trip from his home in New England for that purpose. This addition included a large schoolroom (the present student dining room), two adjoining classrooms, a broad hallway, cloak room (called the "shawl room") and store room on the ground floor; and a wide hall, and a dormitory large enough for twenty-five girls on the floor above.

In 1910 a third floor dormitory was built, again by Timothy Hussey. The addition made it possible for the school to double the number of boarding pupils.

In 1925 the building was remodeled under the supervision of A. Edward Kelsey. The third floor was extended the full length of the building, including rooms for teachers as well as a large dormitory. The school could now accommodate 75 boarders. It was at this time that the old dormitory on the second floor was converted into a pleasant chapel room and named "Swift Hall" in honor of Sarah J. Swift of New England, who had given generously of her means to further the work of the Ramallah Mission.



The Home Economics Cottage at Friends Girls School. The front entrance, shaded by pine trees, is on the right of the picture.

In 1929 the Home Economics Cottage was built under the supervision of A. Willard Jones. The beautiful building, designed as a model home, was a memorial to Ermina Jones Totah, Khalil Totah's young wife, who had died in 1928, while serving at the Mission.



High school girls at Friends Girls School having a sewing class in the Home Economics Cottage.

In 1934 a classroom building, "Whittier Hall" was constructed under the direction of Khalil A. Totah. The name of the building was chosen by Alice Whittier Jones, for whom the handsome stone structure was the realization of a cherished dream. Rather than having her own name used as the honorary title, she asked that the building be named for the Quaker poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, to whom she was related through her mother's family.



Whittier Hall, the classroom building, showing the new addition (left) built in 1962.

Curriculum. In 1962-1963 the curriculum of the junior and senior high school classes was changed to more nearly correspond with the curriculum of schools in the United States. Also the system of designating the classes was changed to correspond with the numbering system of the government schools. In 1963-1964 the twelfth year above the kindergarten will be added and the lower kindergarten or nursery class will be dropped. Then the classes will be called the kindergarten, elementary class one through six, preparatory (junior high) classes one, two and three, the secondary (senior high) classes one, two, and three.

Although graduates from the eleventh year have been accepted in colleges or universities of the students' choice, the addition of the twelfth year will prepare them better for whatever they do. Some of those who enter American colleges or universities, including the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, will be qualified, we hope, for the advanced placement program and will enter the sophomore class directly from graduation in Ramallah.



Boarding pupils at Friends Girls School having study hour in the library.

While from fifty to seventy per cent of our graduates continue their study in colleges and universities in Jordan, Lebanon, the United States, Egypt, England and Germany, some go into work or home making directly after graduation. Any who do not wish to study college preparatory mathematics in the last three years of high school may take the business course, consisting of business arithmetic, commercial geography and probably consumer education.



A class of girls in the laboratory at Friends Boys School. The teacher is Fuad Zarou, a Friend.

The laboratory periods for the girls in biology and chemistry are held at Friends Boys School. Beginning in 1963-1964, physics will be taught to the girls in the twelfth year, and their laboratory periods will be held at the Boys School.

The English speaking section, opened in 1958-1959, has continued to grow from the first group of eleven students to forty-three in 1961-1962. The section was first established for children of American parents who were working near Ramallah, with the United Nations forces, with the diplomatic corps, with Friends or other religious missions. Then the group came to be truly an international school, with children from England, Greece, Norway, Sweden and Honduras, as well as the United States. More recently the large majority of the children in this group have been children born in the United States of Arab parents who have now returned to Jordan. They study in the English-speaking section in grades one through six, because they do not know Arabic sufficiently well to study lessons in that language. This is a "two-room school" with two teachers teaching three classes each. When the children finish the sixth grade, they go into the first preparatory class, where most of the lessons are taught in English.



Kindergarten children at Friends Girls School, enjoying their rhythm band.

The lower kindergarten class, as it is called, is in reality a nursery class. This class of four-year-olds are in school for half-days only. Children in the upper kindergarten class begin the study of English, Arabic and arithmetic. The study of the Arabic and English languages and mathematics continues to be emphasized throughout the school. In the three preparatory and three secondary or high school classes, the lessons in mathematics, sciences, ancient and European history, home economics, and religion, besides English language and literature, are taught in the English language from American and British textbooks. This practice is followed because most of the colleges and universities which our graduates attend teach in English. Our students are then well prepared to continue their study.

There is a real effort to provide music classes as well as private piano lessons for the students. The choir, composed of both boys and girls, provides musical programs for the schools and community at Christmas and Easter. Physical education also has a place in the program.

Students. There are only a few Friends in the school; but the influence of Friends makes a daily impression upon the life of the student body. Greek Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, Baptists and members of the Armenian churches are included in the list of church affiliates represented. Nearly forty per cent of the students are Moslems.

It has been determined that with the exception of the war years, when there was naturally a decided decrease, the enrollment has in-



Third Elementary Class at Friends Girls School lined up to enter Swift Hall for a program. The teacher is Clare Zughbaba. The boys of this class will go to Friends Boys School next year. Here they are "the big boys." There, they will be "the small boys" again.

creased more or less steadily since the founding of the school. Between 1953 and 1961 the total enrollment increased fifty-five per cent; and from 1957 to 1961, 29.6 per cent. Now, 428 students including boys in the kindergarten, the first three elementary classes and the English-speaking section, are enrolled in the Friends Girls School. A number of the boys board at the Friends Boys School and come to the Friends Girls School for classes each day.

Many of our graduates have become distinguished in various fields. Many are teachers in the schools of the country and in colleges and universities of the Middle East and elsewhere. About half of the fifteen instructors in the new teacher training college established by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency near Ramallah are graduates of Friends Girls School. Many are leaders in community projects and organizations. Others are the wives of local and national officials. Two recently received degrees of doctor of medicine. One of these has returned to her country of Ethiopia and is doing medical work there. The other has opened a clinic in Ramallah. Several graduates are nurses. One has recently received her Ph.D. degree in history from the Sorbonne.

In the last few years more and more children are coming as day students from the outlying villages in the district of Ramallah. This seems to indicate more willingness on the part of parents to have their daughters secure an education.

Teachers. During recent years most of the teachers have been recruited from the local community. Besides the principal, there are twenty-eight full time or part time teachers in 1962-1963. Of these three are Americans. Two of the local teachers have bachelors' degrees from the Beirut College for Women in Lebanon and a college in the United States respectively. Nine are graduates of our own school. Three have given more than twenty-five years of service in the school, and one has given more than fifty years.



Staff of Friends Girls School, 1962

First row: Lois Snyder, Misadeh Daoud, Wadia Shatara, Anna O. Langston, Kareemeh Nasir, Zahia Bibi, Virginia Vigrass, Huda Bibi.

Second row: Berta Butros, Flora Kahyayan, Siham Halteh, Lily Shatara, Wadia Hamzeh, Leila Nijim, Leila Zarou, May Bahu, Priscilla Keene, Julia Lubbat.

Third row: Juliette Totah, Salwa Kawar, Clare Zughbaba, Aniseh Assousa, Lutfi Fasheh, Lotte Fasheh, Mary Fasheh.

Not in the picture: Fadwa Totah, Asma Faris; and Fuad Zarou and Joseph Langdon as part time teachers.

Buildings. Since Whittier Hall was built in 1934 there has been little change in the physical aspect of the campus. In 1955 the Totah property adjoining the campus was again leased for a dormitory for the smallest boarders and for two classrooms.

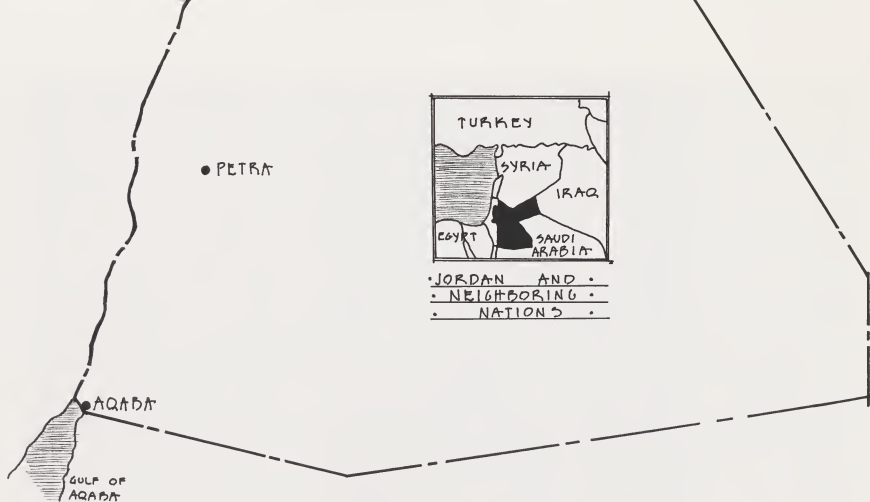
A few improvements have been made within the main building. New terrazzo floors and stairways (composed of bits of stone in cement) have been laid; the kitchen has been enlarged by building an additional room and a fuel-oil range has been installed. In the boarding department an automatic kerosene burner has been installed, so that the girls may have hot water mornings and evenings. The library has been enlarged as to space and as to number of volumes. New office furniture has been provided in memory of Frances E. Wheeler of New England Yearly Meeting.

The most recent and most extensive improvement for some years has been the construction of four large classrooms as an addition to Whittier Hall. They were completed in September, 1962. This construction was made possible by a private bequest and generous contributions by Alumnae and Friends. These classrooms are light and pleasant and are much appreciated by students and teachers.



One of the two sections of the second grade at Friends Girls School, with their home room teacher, Miss Salwa Kavar. These children are proud to be occupants of one of the four new classrooms added to Whittier Hall in 1962. The desks were the gift of the Children's Department of the United Society of Friends Women in the U.S.A. in 1959.





The Future. No one can determine just what the future will hold in any sphere, especially economically and politically. However, former students, officials of the Beirut College for Women and the University of Beirut, personnel of other religious missions, American educators working in Jordan, and others have stated their belief in the on-going purpose and value of the Friends Schools and their contributions to the lives of the people of the Middle East and other parts of the world where our students have gone.

In view of this and the fact of the steady and rapid increase in enrollment, the schools will probably be needed for some time to come.

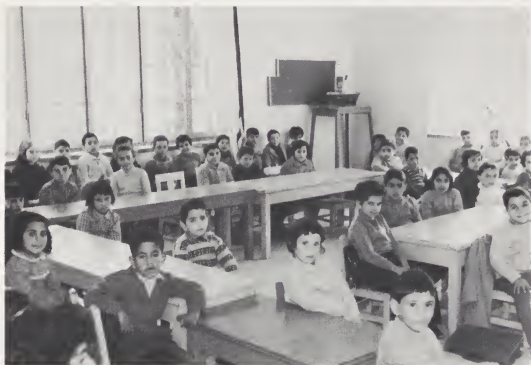


Children of Friends Girls School marching in line to chapel in Swift Hall.

The Friends Girls School is the only Protestant Christian day or boarding school for girls in this part of Jordan, and one of two in the whole country. This gives us a unique and awful responsibility and privilege. Because of this, surely we must accept the responsibility, and through unwavering faith, supreme devotion, and complete obedience to the fulfillment of the Divine will for Friends and for the people of this area, provide the best school possible in every way.

In spite of the fact that more and more schools are being established by the government of Jordan and by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, our school remains one of the few schools who rank high in preparation for college. Former students and others attest to the fact that graduates of the Friends Schools get along better in college than others. As long as this is true it would seem that we should continue emphasizing college preparation. Whether we should

continue the courses in business or provide vocational courses may be open to question.



The Kindergarten and small primary children have their own morning chapel in the large kindergarten room in Whittier Hall.



A section of Swift Hall crowded with children for morning chapel.

As long as the English-speaking section, one of two schools in all Jordan providing elementary education in the English language, is serving a sufficient number of people, especially Arabs, we probably should continue it. It may be an incentive for Arabs to return to this country.

The thought that Friends should establish a college has been discussed. However, since UNRWA and the government of Jordan with the help of AID of the United States, have established teacher training colleges for both men and women in Jordan, and since Bir Zeit College has established a Junior College with Ford Foundation aid, it would seem that Friends probably should not now attempt to begin work here in the field of higher education.

If then, our task is to provide an elementary and secondary school which is unique religiously and academically, there are many things we need and many ways in which we must improve. First of all, our most urgent need is adequate facilities. Even with the new classrooms, some rooms are much overcrowded. With the addition of the twelfth grade in 1963-1964, one of the elementary classes which now has two sections will have to be restricted to one section in order to provide a room for the advanced class. Two sections of each of the first, second and third elementary classes were opened in 1962-1963. Yet there was not space for all who applied in those and in some other classes.



Recess at Friends Girls School on a winter day.

In regard to new facilities, we are very grateful to the United Society of Friends Women in the United States for undertaking to raise \$6,000.00 in 1963 to build a sanitary unit in Whittier Hall and a second floor on the Home Economics Cottage.

A second great need is for more well-trained teachers. A well-organized and effectively administered in-service training program is urgently needed. We need American teachers for the English-speaking section and for the teaching of English in the senior high school.

Although the financial condition of many people in the country is much better than formerly, it seems that we shall continue to need some scholarship aid funds for many who do not have adequate means.

The administrative personnel should be increased. Some of the administrative duties that should be better performed are the supervision of classroom work of staff; more individual attention to students, especially the boarders, and their academic and emotional problems; the direction of extra-curricular activities for both boarders and day students; and a more nearly adequate in-service training program.

The parents of many of our boarders are wealthy. Their homes are expensively furnished. Our boarding facilities are far below the average of all the homes from which our boarders come, in quality and convenience. While we do not expect to provide boarding facilities that are luxurious, we should consider the possibility of offering better living accommodations, with more privacy for the girls, in smaller rooms.



A view across a section of Ramallah, showing different types of architecture. In the lower center is the new town garden. The large tile roofed building half hidden in trees, on the upper left, is the main building of Friends Girls School.



"El Manara," the lofty light that stands at a street intersection in Ramallah. The street on the right leads to Friends Boys School.

FRIENDS BOYS SCHOOL

History. Friends Boys School was founded in 1901 under the name "Boys Training Home of Ramallah." For twelve years the Ramallah people had watched the development of the Girls Training Home and coveted similar training for their boys. As early as 1892 the annual report of the Ramallah Mission to New England Yearly Meeting referred to the urgent requests of the townspeople for a boys' school, and concludes, "How all would rejoice, if in the near future we could see upon this 'Hill of God' in Bible Lands, training homes for both girls and boys."

Elihu and Almy Chase Grant came from New England and opened the Boys Training Home in a rented house a short distance from the Girls Training Home. Report says that eighty boys applied for admission, but there was accommodation for only fifteen. Of the boys accepted, nine were from families of Friends, and only one came from outside Ramallah. From 1901 until 1914 the Home was conducted in rented buildings. It was never able to accommodate more than about thirty boys. No day students were accepted prior to 1919, when the school was reopened after the close of World War I. The first graduating class, seven boys, received their certificates in 1906.

Prior to World War I the superintendent of the Mission had general supervision of the Boys Training Home, with an Arab in charge as head teacher. Farajallah Farajallah was head teacher under Elihu Grant. When Elihu Grant retired from the field in 1903 because of ill health, A. Edward Kelsey came as superintendent, and remained until 1908. Absalom Rosenberger was superintendent from 1909 to 1913, after which time A. Edward Kelsey again held the position until 1927.

From 1904 to 1912 Amin Nasr served capably as head teacher of the Training Home. In 1912 Khalil Totah, who had been the first pupil enrolled in the school, and who was now newly returned from study in America, became the headmaster and served until early in 1914, when he was called up for military training. At the end of the training period Khalil returned to America to continue his studies. Meanwhile, A. Edward Kelsey had again resumed responsibility for the Boys Home. The year 1914 ended with the graduation of three girls and five boys from the Training Homes, the last for a number of years.



Side view (left) and rear view of Kelsey Hall with its surrounding pines, Friends Boys School, Ramallah.

In 1914 the large permanent building called "Kelsey Hall" was completed on a plot of some eleven acres of land purchased by the Mission for the school. However, it proved impossible to open school the next fall in the new quarters, for in August, 1914, World War I broke upon the world. This spacious new building suffered the fortunes of war for five years, serving as a home for the Turkish Mudir in 1915, then as a hospital for armed forces, first of the Central Powers, then as the tide of war turned, of England. The student dining room on the ground floor was used by the Turkish soldiers as a stable for their horses until 1917, when the English army drove the Turks from the country.

In 1919 the school reopened under the new name "Friends Boys School." Day boys as well as boarders were admitted for the first time in that year and they have continued to make up a considerable part of the student body ever since.

Since that time, a series of able men have given service as principals of the school: Moses Bailey, 1920-21; John Haramy, 1921-22; A. Willard Jones, 1922-27; James E. Sutton, April-October, 1925, during a furlough of A. Willard Jones; Khalil A. Totah, 1927-44; James E. Sutton, 1931-32, during a furlough of Khalil A. Totah; A. Willard Jones, 1944-53; T. Robert Bassett, 1951-52, during a furlough of A. Willard Jones; Delbert Reynolds, 1954-56; George A. Scherer, 1956-57; Harold V. Smuck, 1957-61; T. Robert Bassett, 1961-.

As the years passed, the school acquired additional buildings. In the early 1930's, a substantial stone house built in the traditional style of the older Ramallah houses, was purchased by the school with the approval of the Board of Missions in America. It is situated directly across the road from the school proper. A substantial contribution toward the purchase of the property was given by a donor in England. She was the mother of Phyllis Wright Sutton, who with her husband James E. Sutton was then serving in Friends Ramallah Mission. Mrs. Wright was interested in helping toward providing a building which would be especially devoted to wholesome recreation for the boys of the school, as a memorial to her late husband, Francis Wright. The newly acquired house was now equipped as a recreation house and named "Francis Wright House."



Francis Wright House at Friends Boys School.

For a number of years the house was operated as a recreation house, even during school vacations, when there was a dearth of wholesome activities for boys in the town. The time came when traffic on the road became such a hazard that it was necessary to remove the recreational equipment to the campus proper. Since that time, Francis Wright House has continued to be an asset to the institution in a variety of ways, serving at different periods as a relief center, as apartments for teachers of the school, and as a center for adult education.



Front view of Grant Hall, Friends Boys School.

Grant Hall, for which a generous contribution was made by the late William T. Grant in America, and which was named in honor of his brother, Elihu Grant, the founder of the school, was completed in 1934. It contains a pleasant apartment for the principal's family, and two dormitories for the younger boys of the school.



Grant Hall, Friends Boys School. The wing on the right is the principal's apartment; that on the left contains dormitories for small boys, on both lower and upper floors.



The auditorium at Friends Boys School. To the left is an airy corridor, from which open four pleasant classrooms.

In 1939 an auditorium with four adjoining classrooms was completed, making it possible to hold commencement exercises indoors, for the first time in the history of the school, and to have adequate space for chapel and other school assemblies.

Friends Boys School rejoices in ample playing fields for its lively sports program, and flowers and trees to give it a homelike atmosphere.



Basketball game between Friends Boys School and the Frere College in Jerusalem. The battle is being fought on the court of Friends Boys School.

Like its sister institution, the Friends Boys School was established with the purpose of developing high character in the youth of Palestine and preparing them to live useful, worthy lives. For more than sixty years the school has continued its service because the people of Palestine (now Jordan) have valued the fact that it has spiritual as well as material aims. It has served under the Turkish Empire, the British Palestine Mandate and the independent Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, always without being in any way related to the prevailing government and without being subsidized by any government. However, it *has* emphasized good relations with the officials of the country and has served Arab youth so well as to be valued and respected by thousands of people in the country. It holds a warm place in the hearts of alumni scattered over the whole Middle East and farther afield. From an elementary school of fifteen boys in modest rented quarters, it has grown into a school that offers a college preparatory education for some 250 boys.



Setting up exercises after school at Friends Boys School.

Curriculum. The school concentrates on good elementary and secondary education for boys who will usually go on to college, or more directly into responsible places in business or government. Our school has for many years been distinguished from public and from much private education, both by academic standards and by emphasis on character.

As presently arranged, Friends Boys School accepts boys from the fourth grade through high school. Boys in classes below the fourth grade attend coeducational classes at Friends Girls School, either going daily from their homes as day students, or living at Friends Boys School and going to the Girls School for classes. With boys in grades four through twelve, there are nine classrooms filled with students on the campus. More than seventy are boarders. The others come daily from their homes, usually in Ramallah, but often from as far as ten miles away.



A chemistry class at Friends Boys School watches a demonstration performed by Fuad Zarou, their teacher.



Early morning scene in the dormitory at Friends Boys School.

Friends Boys School graduates usually find opportunities for higher education after completing the secondary school. Many enter the highly respected American University of Beirut in Lebanon. A few attend junior colleges in Jordan and Syria. Some go to Germany or England. Most go to the United States. A considerable number go directly into jobs as teachers or as clerks in government or business offices.



Boys of Friends Boys School learn skill in handling tools in the Manual Training Shop.

Because so many students plan to continue their education in American colleges and universities, the school is developing its instructional program on the American pattern in the secondary grades, adopting American textbooks and organizing its courses in line with the typical American college preparatory curriculum. Preparation for the College Entrance Board examinations and for the Advanced Placement tests is part of this program. Thus the school will not only meet the needs and interests of its students better, but as an American school, will also serve to demonstrate the value of American educational ideals and practices.



A faculty meeting in the Library of Friends Boys School, 1962

Left to right: Bidie Nijim, James Keene, Sabir Dahir, Adib Musallam, T. Robert Bassett, principal, Farid Tabri, Faiz Matuk, Ibrahim Nijim, Farah Darraj, Akel Biltaji, Nabih Khoury.



Study hall at Friends Boys School, Ramallah. The rear windows of this large room face in the direction of Jerusalem. On a clear day one can see the towers on the Mount of Olives from these windows.



The Lowell Jones Library at Friends Boys School is a quiet place for reading and study. The library is a memorial to Lowell Jones, the son of Rufus M. Jones.

Teaching Staff. The Friends Boys School teaching staff is made up mainly of Arabs, most of whom are graduates of the school, with a special understanding of it and dedication to it. Of the usual staff of about thirteen, it is normal to find three or four college graduates and one or two others with some training beyond high school. Most of our teachers are married, making for a most wholesome stability among the staff. Single men are usually resident teachers who perform supervisory duties in the boarding department. There is always need for training in good health habits and good manners and attention to the free-time activities of the boys.

The Student Body. From where do the Friends Boys School students come? A few come from outside the country—from Arabia, Libya, Lebanon, Syria, Kuwait and other Arab countries. One or two may be Americans—sons of missionaries or of United States foreign service employees. But most of them are Jordanians. About 75 per cent of the boys live in Ramallah or in surrounding villages. Boys from the villages, whether they come daily by bus or enter the boarding department, are finding opportunities far beyond those within reach of most of their friends in their home communities. Several boys come from Jerusalem, ten miles away. Several are in attendance every year from the capital city, Amman, two hours' travel eastward. A few come from distant towns like Irbid in the north, and Aqaba, on the shore of the Red Sea in the south.

A survey of the enrollment in a recent year reveals the variety of religious backgrounds in the student body. Out of 223 boys, 99 were Moslems—well over 40 per cent of the enrollment. Among the Christians were 69 Greek Orthodox, 21 Anglican (Episcopalian), 10 Roman Catholic, 16 Greek Catholic and four Armenian church representatives. There were three "miscellaneous" and one Friend. The Friends community is small, and the school-age children at that particular time were nearly all girls.

It is understandable that some of our students come from financially prosperous homes. Their fathers can afford to pay the fees. Fathers of Ramallah boys often have small shops or work in government offices or in the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. They can afford to send their boys to our school as day students, and to pay the tuition fees in full. But there are also poorer boys and many refugees enrolled in the school, because Friends make a conscientious effort to include them. The scholarship funds given by generous friends of the school are used to supplement the part of the fees which these poorer boys are able to pay.

The son of an army sergeant comes from the army headquarters in the eastern desert. He studies faithfully and deeply appreciates the moral tone of the school, as does his father. The boy is one of five children, and the father must have a substantial grant if he is to manage to keep his boy here as a boarder.



Lunch time in the student dining room at Friends Boys School. A staff member sits at head of each table.

Recently a woman died in a neighboring village and left a refugee husband with six young children. The school granted a full scholarship to the eldest son of the family, an eager youngster of thirteen. A kind friend offered to provide clothing and enough money for books and incidentals for the boy. The opportunity may open up a new life of hope for the family.

A small boy in Ramallah showed scholastic promise, but his father's earnings as a church janitor were only \$6.00 a month. The family can pay a little from their meager living; a friend helps a little; and the school grants enough scholarship aid to cover the rest of the tuition, so that the boy may have a chance in our school.

These are only a few cases from recent years. They demonstrate the concern of the Friends that Friends Boys School serve every worthy boy whether able to pay full fees or not.

Friends Boys School is in its seventh decade of graduating boys with sound education and good character. They are boys who have shared the fruits of Christian devotion and have had an opportunity to know the Christian faith and principles. Many of these boys will be modest but solid citizens of the future—truly the salt of the earth. Some will rise to high positions of leadership in government and business. Many will make their contribution in the professions. But all will bear the school's indelible mark in their lives, a mark of which they are proud.

Molding such lives is the shared responsibility of Arabs who work faithfully in our school and of Americans who either come to Jordan to work alongside them, or remain at home to contribute their money and their prayerful support. All bear their part in the mission of Friends Boys School.



A camera is a diverting attraction for people walking to chapel with all proper decorum. These lively boys are students at Friends Girls School, but they look forward eagerly to the time when they will be fourth graders at Friends Boys School, wearing "real" football boots and jaunty caps in the school colors, maroon and gray.

